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MAPPING OF THE ANCIENT HAWAIIAN VILLAGE RUINS  
AT MAONAKALA, KANAHENA, EAST MAUI.

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Mapping of the ancient Hawaiian village ruins at Maonakala,  
Kahahena, East Maui

Prepared for the Department of Land and Natural Resources

By the Bernice P. Bishop Museum

Introduction

The clearing and mapping of the little cluster of ruins of ancient Hawaiian dwelling sites fronting the south shore of East Maui at Maonakala, Kahahena, west of La Perouse Bay, prepares them for incorporation into the Ahihi Bay Natural Area Reserve being established by the Department of Land and Natural Resources. By isolating this cove--surrounded by the silent testimony of its Hawaiian past--from the sight and sound of enveloping foreign culture, the viewer can recreate mentally the simplicity and charm of the ancient Hawaiian life at this spot and preserve this heritage for the Hawaiians and all those who live in Hawaii.

The clearing was made possible by the assignment of a park keeper by Harry Gibson of Maui State Parks to supervise a team of four Maui Hawaiians under the directions given by Kenneth P. Emory of Bishop Museum. Joseph Souza, Jr., Administrator of State Parks obtained funds from the Department of Land and Natural Resources for the mapping and identification of features. These activities were carried out December 13-16, 1971 by Kenneth P. Emory, Robert Bevacqua, and Lesley Bruce from Bishop Museum, with assistance from the Hawaiian team--Charles P. Keau, William Keahi, Steven Kalohelani, and Timothy Freitas. A copy

of the resulting map of this area is enclosed.

The Maonakala site was chosen as an example of the series of relatively intact ruins of Hawaiian habitation complexes scattered along the dry south coast of East Maui proceeding eastward from as far as Kaupo. As the most easily accessible, it is also the most endangered by approaching developments. By marking it and having it serve to illustrate the ancient Hawaiian setting in this type of environment, we hope that remaining sites will not be needlessly destroyed before they can be studied and incorporated, insofar as practicable, into the landscape of the future.

The attention of Bishop Museum was first attracted to this site when Kenneth P. Emory, in company with Beatrice Savage of the Maui Historical Society, visited it on August 25, 1957. Its location was subsequently noted on the county's "Highways of Maui" map. Its Hawaiian name Ma'ona-ka-la, was fortunately learned by Elspeth Sterling in 1961 from Charles Aikala, who had long lived at La Perouse Bay.

#### General description

The plan of the ruins shows the disposition of the main features over an area 200 yards (meters) along the shore and 130 yards (meters) inland. Walled and terraced platforms mark dwelling sites arranged around the back of a level area facing the pebbled beach and spared by the aa lava flow which reached the ocean on both sides. Geologist Dr. Howard Powers is working on the problem of the date of this flow. We believe it is earlier than the one that built out the great Cape Kinau to the south, between Ahihii Bay and La Perouse Bay; this cape was not there when the

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La Perouse Expedition mapped the shore in 1786 but was there when Vancouver's Expedition traced the coastline in 1794.

The well, walls of a canoe house, and some dwelling sites may have been there prior to the aa flow that surround Maonakala, but the inland parts of the sites we mapped had been adapted to this flow. Broken crockery in the floor of house yard B6-8 indicated that it was inhabited into historic times.

Estimates of the length of time this cove was inhabited and the age and function of features within it will have to await archaeological excavations.

Ancient stepping-stone trails lead into and out of the village, and worn paths connect the dwelling sites. The swale behind sites B6-5 to B6-7 leads into a little ravine not covered by the aa flow. On its floor house yards, enclosures, and suitable garden spots are found for at least a quarter of a mile inland, and sections of stepping stone paths occur along its length and lead into and out of it.

About 75 yards (meters) south of the site, B6-10, is another dwelling site on the aa flow above another level area around which the flow moved. It seems that, to be safe from storm waves, houses needed to be at a high level or set well back from the shore, because scattered heavily over the areas near the beach are pebbles deposited by high waves.

Along the trails approaching the village of Maonakala are tiny enclosures on the aa lava suitable for sitting positions. The scatter of fist-size, water-worn stones about them and occasional small piles of them here and there have led us to believe that these enclosures were made as positions for defense. The village may have been subject to

raids during the wars in the time of Kalaniopuu and his nephew Kamehameha (1750-1795), who sought to bring Maui under their control.

There is good reason to believe that there was a village here at the time of the descent of the aa flow which now surrounds it and on which it is partly built. It seems even possible that the walls of the house lots B6-4 and B6-8 diverted the flow around them. These are among the problems to be solved.

#### The separate features

B6-2. The well presents a puzzle, in that there are two pits within the heavy-walled enclosure surrounding them. Our Hawaiian team labored several days to clear these stone-lined pits of rubbish and fallen stones. Each pit is more than 7 feet (2 meters) deep. Our survey revealed that not only was there no water in them at the level of mean tide, but digging down another 50 cm (20 in.) below what seemed to be the original floor still did not tap water. The smaller pit has vertical sides so that one cannot readily climb down into it. Was it constructed in recent times with the idea of erecting a windmill? We took samples of the deposit of sediment and decomposed woody matter at the bottom of these pits to determine if they might be the remains of a prehistoric bog and if the change in the climate of the vicinity in historic times has rendered these pits useless as wells.

B6-3. Judging from the length of the stone walls, this canoe house, could have accommodated the two hulls of a 45-foot double canoe, before the obviously later-built dividing wall was put in.

B6-4. This house lot and B6-8 on the other side of the swale were

the choice spots of this hamlet. A kou tree (Cordia subcordata) growing within the enclosure shows that these will flourish here and very probably supplied the main shade for the people living at Maonakala. The function of the enclosure at the northeast corner will have to be determined through excavation (garden enclosure, animal pen, burial ground?). A most unusual feature is a bench running part way along the inner side of the east wall and partly covered with marble-size pebbles. It could serve as a sitting wall. A natural ledge forms a low terrace in the southeast corner of the yard and was partly edged with stones serving as a curb. The floor of the yard was generously scattered with pebbles and a number of large water-worn stones suitable for seats or anvils. It is quite possible that a men's house here, hale mua, served as a heiau for the village.

B6-5. This is a two-house yard divided by a loose wall of small stones. Curiously, the inland compartment is lower by as much as 6 in. (14 cm) than the seaward section, and more thoroughly paved with pebbles. At the back of this yard is a small enclosure, open at both ends [for a woman's menstrual hut (hale pe'a?)]. Near the southeast corner there is a rough, shallow pit behind an overhang of a small ledge which has been utilized to form a cupboard.

B6-6. The corner of a house floor is indicated by an L-shaped wall and a paving of fine pebbles. Behind the house a wall connects with house sites B6-5 and B6-7.

B6-7. This house yard has a solidly strewn pebble floor. The L-shaped wall along the back and south side is 3 ft (1 meter) high, but the other two walls are much lower.

B6-8. A large household must have dwelt within this house yard. There is space on the main floor, which is scattered with pebbles and shell midden, for several houses, but only one house floor is clearly defined. The thick-walled enclosure at the northeast corner may have been the walls of a thatched house. A circle of stones 6 ft (2 meters) in diameter, on the front of the terrace, marks the site of an imu, as indicated by the charcoal within it. Water-worn boulders lie here and there on the platform, serving as seats and anvils.

B6-9. This is a large house-yard complex, formed by terracing and paving of aa clinkers and pebbles, and containing a fisherman's shrine (ko'a), as indicated by the pile of branch coral laid on the raised platform within the elevated floor of the thick-walled enclosure. A square fireplace, formed of thin slabs set on edge, is imbedded in the south terrace; this must have existed within a house. Another house floor is indicated on the north terrace by some curbs and a pebble floor. An outline of large waterworn-basalt and lava stones on the north end of the south terrace may mark a grave.

B6-10. This is a house site built on the flow. The interior had to be leveled with aa clinkers and beach pebbles to be habitable. The crumbling walls make the site almost invisible.

#### Recommendations

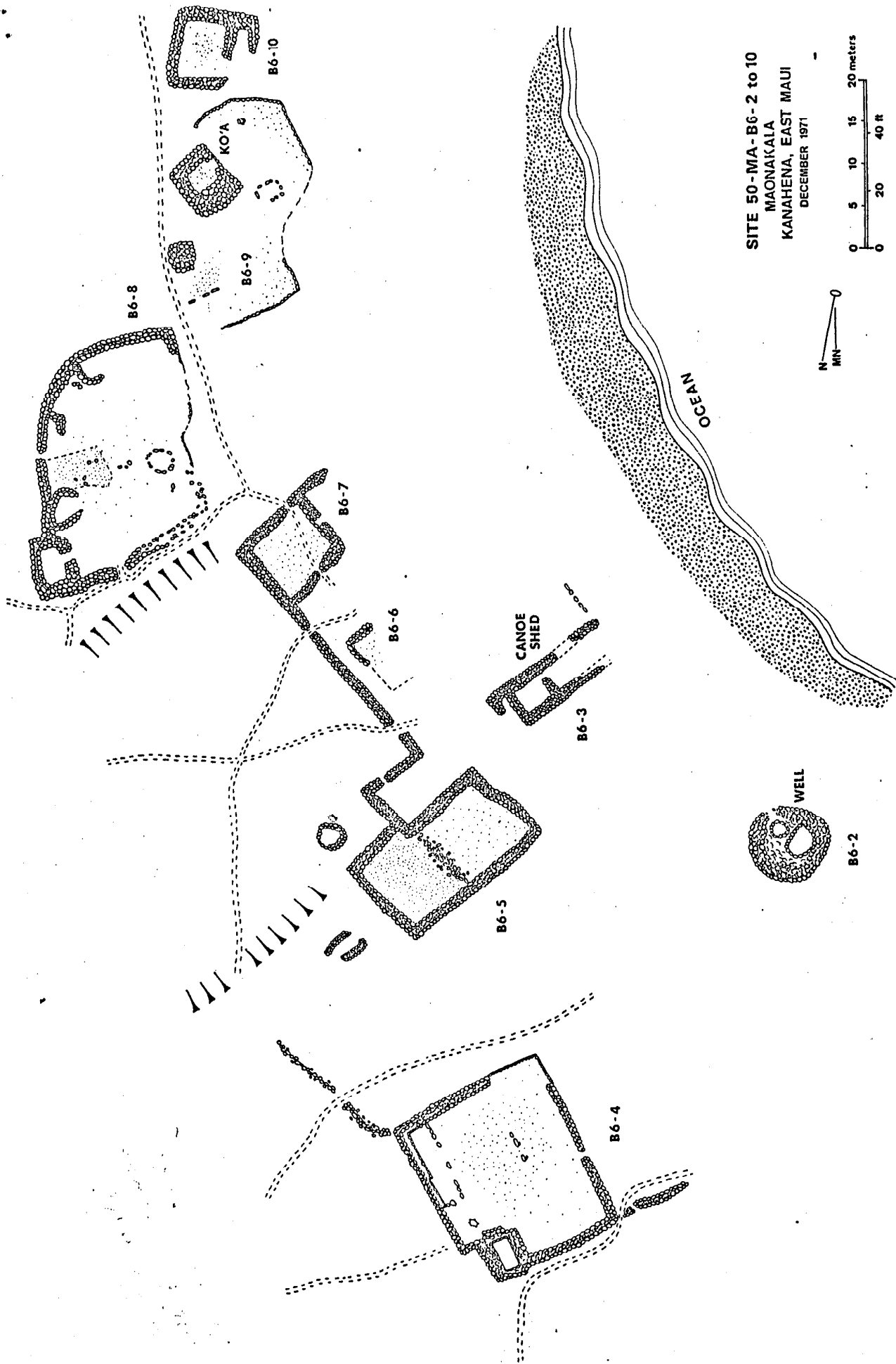
Now that the area of the Maonakala village site is thoroughly cleared and the undesired growth has been poisoned, it would be a great advantage to maintain this area and gradually work at tidying up the ruins under guiding rules from the Bishop Museum, awaiting such times in the future

when arrangements can be made for various archaeological investigations involving excavations and restoration.

The Bishop Museum's original large-scale field plans and numerous photographs--showing the details of collapsed walls, the heights of walls, and other observations of the condition of the sites--will be held at the Museum to be available in any future archaeological work on these sites.

It might be well to ask the Maui Historical Society to spot-check the area periodically and guard against vandalism.





SITE 50-MA-B6-2 to 10  
 MAONAKALA  
 KANAHEHA, EAST MAUI  
 DECEMBER 1971

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 MIN

0 5 10 15 20 meters  
 0 20 40 ft

